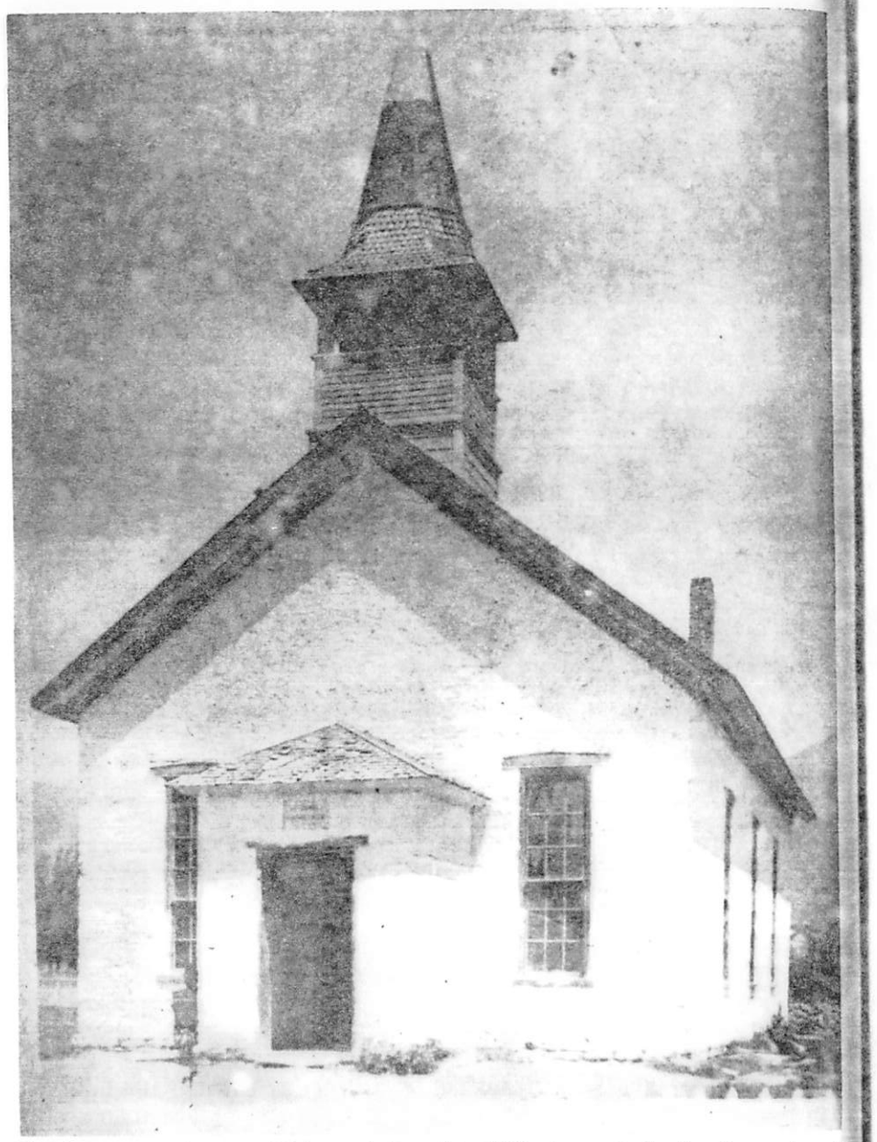


The first meeting house in Midway, dedicated in 1895. It was built of native rock and measured 30 by 60 feet.

About the same time in 1886 a new tithing office was built. It was also built of native rock and measured 24 by 32 ft. with a small belfry on the north end. It was located where Reed Kohler's residence now stands. There was a root cellar underneath the building where potatoes, vegetables, etc., paid as tithing were stored. The back part was used as a granary for grains paid in tithing. At this time much of the tithing was paid in produce.

The front room was still used for various types of meetings and as an extra class room for Sunday School and Primary. The Relief Society also met there for many years. In the back part of the lot was the tithing hay barn. It was a great problem many times for the Bishop to convert the produce into cash before spoilage took place.

The old Midway Tithing Office as depicted in a sketch by artist Bill Whitaker

1888 was a very dry year for Provo Valley. Many of the old springs dried up. On June 11 there was no water at all in the Provo River bed between Midway and Heber. Because of the drought, there was only two-thirds of a crop raised in Midway.

In January, 1893 Bishop Van Wagoner asked for a release as Bishop of Midway Ward. January 29, 1893 John Watkins was ordained Bishop by Apostle John Henry Smith and Alvah J. Alexander, 1st Counselor, Conrad Abbegglen, 2nd Counselor, John Huber, ward clerk and chorister.

At the Saturday session of stake conference held January 26 the Midway Choir sang four request numbers.

On the evening of January 27, after the close of the stake conference, Apostle John Henry Smith came to Midway with President Hatch and dedicated the new meeting house.

With all the work and hardship, the pioneers took time out for a little recreation in the form of dancing and programs. The following is a sample of an Old Folks' party the first to be held on April 21, 1899:

The old folks of Midway held a reunion at the Social Hall on Friday, April 21, 1899. Owing to the demise of our esteemed townsman, Elder Elijah Alder, a large portion of the ward was not represented at the reunion; however, as it were, about 90 people participated in the enjoyment. An interesting program had been prepared by the committee of arrangements.

At noon the aged folks who had been brought together by comfortable conveyances, were all seated and the proceedings commenced by the congregation singing, "We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet, and etc." Bishop John Watkins presiding at the organ. Prayer was offered by Counselor A. J. Alexander. Bishop Watkins made a short speech of "Welcome," followed by Counselor Conrad Abbegglen in bidding all a hearty welcome in the German tongue. Now everybody was

One of the first Sunday School kindergarten classes held in Midway in 1903. Pictured in front of the John A. Fortie home, are, first row, left to right, Cuba Van Wagoner, Thelma Van Wagoner, Alice Probst, unknown, Walter Buehler, Stella Culmer, Grace Reese, Fawn Bronson, Lora Bronson, Stella Probst, unknown, unknown, unknown. Second row, unknown, unknown, Rosetta Boss, unknown, Earl Provost, Homer Sulser, Lamont Epperson, Francis Probst, unknown, unknown, Jessie Smith. Third row, Lila Baum, unknown, Noah Besendorfer, Wallburga Besendorfer, Owen Burgener, Nate Coleman, unknown, Lowell Kohler, Reed Abplanalp, Edith Wilson, Erwan Murdock, Retha Murdock. Back row, Trella Provost, Ida Huber, Cora Street, Blanche Huffaker, Carson Smith, Arnold Burgener and Birdie Huffaker. The babes in arms are twins, Dean and Deon, of John A. and Emma Jeffs Fortie.

An older class of the Midway First Ward Sunday School in 1905. First row, left to right, Eliza Bronson, Nancy Van Wagoner, Ann Bronson, Maggie Willett Wilson, teacher, John Van Wagoner Jr., teacher; Luella Van Wagoner, Blanche Greenwell. Second row, Rolland Wootton, Alvah Ross, Henry S. Coleman, Guy E. Coleman, Everett Nelson, Charles Wilson, Charles Buehler.

ready for dinner, and it was announced by Elder Jacob Probst that dinner was also ready. Brother Jeremiah Robey asked the blessing.

Looking over the tables it would have been impossible to accuse anyone of neglect of duty related to gastronomical matters. The tables were loaded with the best in the market, well prepared, and relished in good style. A fine spirit seemed to brood over everybody; the salt and pepper of an occasional pun or part of some ancient story were not wanting, especially those relating to pioneer life. After dinner a recess of half an hour "was ordered" by the master of ceremonies, Jacob Probst, for a social chat: "And there was chat."

Elder Jeremiah Robey followed with a short speech saying, "I was born on the 14th day of April in 1809 in Harrison County, West Virginia. Heard the gospel and went to Nauvoo in (part torn from minutes), was baptized by the Prophet Joseph Smith, in the river, first for myself and afterwards for my father. Brother Joseph then put his arm around me saying: "Now your father is happy!" I worked on the temple doing all the turning that was done there and I hung the last door that swung in the temple. As far as any pay for work is concerned, as men understand it, I did not get any, but I received my endowments there, and that paid me very well for all I did or can do. The saints were poor and molested by the mobs. I finally went to Pisgah and there found my wife busy in killing rattlesnakes. I was at Nauvoo when the Prophet was

killed; had my hand on his horse when he left for Carthage, and Brother Joseph said; "I am going like a lamb to the slaughter." Brother Graham stood by, asking some counsel from Joseph, to which the Prophet replied: "I cannot give you counsel now; I am going to Heaven before I come back again." If we had been in possession of our guns, we might have offered some protection. Brother Robey spoke in an easy and audible manner, his remarks making quite an impression.

Four of the YMMIA glee club rendered an original selection, "Ho, the Herd Bells are Ringing, & etc." Followed by a violin solo by Miss Sylvia Kennah which was exceedingly well executed. Father Conrad Gertsch favored us with a German song in his own alpine style, entitled "The Chamois Hunter." Brother B. M. Smith and Moroni Blood played a violin duet in the good old style of 40 years ago, which made some of the aged dancers twitch their toes in their shoes. Now as to step dancing, Brother A. J. Alexander can do it to anyone's satisfaction, giving an exhibition of his agility and time on the day and date aforesaid. A selection "Do None Remember Me," was sung by Bishop J. Watkins, Mrs. Watkins, and their daughter Polly, followed by a recitation by Miss Polly, entitled "The Old Man in the Palace Car." The members of the glee club gave one of their best, the "Schwitzers Heimweh" in German. In his interesting speech Brother B. M. Smith said he helped to plow the first furroughs on this side of the river in 1895. Brother E. A. Probst and Sister Maggie Watkins sang "Margherite," their voices blending remarkably well. The aforegiven judgment has since been proven to be entirely proper. Misses Ada Mohlman and Eliza E. Huber sang an original piece, "When the May Breeze Whisper," in which they were accompanied from the guitar by Brother John Huber. After singing the doxology and benediction by Bishop John Watkins, everybody appeared well, satisfied and happy, wishing themselves and all mankind much good. And thus closed the old folks party, at Midway, Utah, on Friday afternoon, April 21st, 1899.

By Request of Committee
Very Respectfully,
(s) John Huber

January 1, 1899 James T. Wilson was appointed recorder of speeches at sacrament meeting and Christian Schoney, janitor, at $50 per year.

June 30, 1901 at a ward conference, Conrad Abbegglen, 2nd Counselor, to Bishop John Watkins, was released because of poor health and John Ulrich Buhler was sustained in his place.

December 23, 1902 Bishop John Watkins died and Alvah J. Alexander carried on in his place until a reorganization was effected February 8, 1903.

At a stake quarterly conference held at Heber City February 8, 1903, presided over by Apostle Mathias F. Cowley and the Stake Presidency, the Midway Ward was divided into two wards.

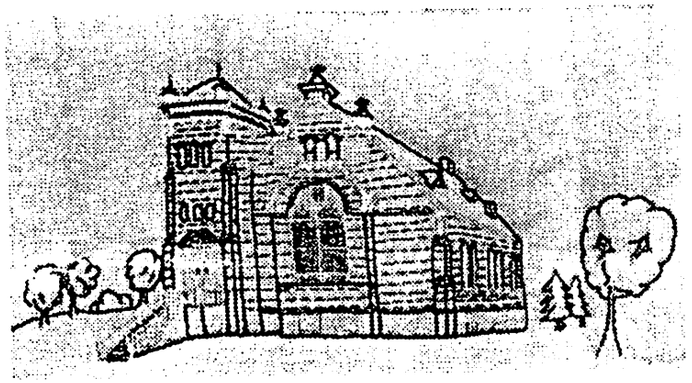
Midway First Ward Sunday School Class of 1905. First row, left to right, Merle Coleman, Cleo Haueter, Matilda Haueter, Pansy Bonner, Eva Bonner, Lethe Coleman, Luella Bonner and Myrtle Watkins. Second row, Jennie Wheable, Lola McCarrell, Carl Haueter, William Haueter, Tracy Smith, Delbert Ross, Mark Nelson, Earl Nelson, Delma Wootton and Mary Remund. Third row, Janet Hair, Pearl Galli, Grace Van Wagoner, Ellen Coleman, Vinnie Coleman, Polly Hair, Della Murri, Leda Smith, Katie Wheable. Teachers were Johnny Murri and Annie Smith.

HISTORY OF MIDWAY FIRST WARD

Midway 1st Ward, Wasatch County, Utah consists of those residing in the east part of Midway, the street running north and south of the public square being the boundary line between the two wards.

At a meeting held in the ward meeting house February 8, 1903 after the quarterly conference at Heber, presided over by Apostle Mathias F. Cowley, Joseph W. Francom was chosen Bishop of the Midway 1st Ward with Attewall Wootton, 1st Counselor, John U. Buhler, 2nd Counselor, and Charles E. Bronson, Ward Clerk.

October 23, 1904, Attewall Wootton was released as 1st Counselor because of his duties in the High Council. John U. Buhler was sustained as 1st Counselor with William L. Van Wagoner, 2nd Counselor.

As the meeting house was located in the Second Ward when the wards were divided, the First Ward held their meetings in the school house. Therefore, it was necessary for a chapel to be erected in their ward. The old meeting house in the Second Ward was valued at $2,000 and is still, after being remodeled, being used by them. They assisted the First Ward in erecting the new chapel. In 1904 steps were taken toward this project and a site purchased. The corner stones were laid March 15, 1905. It was to be built of native limestone. Rock work

The old Midway First Ward was built of native pot rock and was dedicated in 1914.